SPECIFICATION AMENDMENTS:

Please replace the paragraph, at page 4, lines 17-22, with the following amended paragraph:

-- The column hole cover 1 is interposed between a circumferential portion 6 of an aperture 5a (shown in Fig. 2) of a column hole 5 and a steering gear box 9 of a steering mechanism 8 of a steering apparatus 7, the column hole 5 formed at a wall 4a (shown in Fig. 2) of an instrument panel 4 partitioning an engine room 2 and a cabin 3 of an automotive vehicle. --

Please replace the paragraph, at page 7, lines 14-20, with the following amended paragraph:

-- The mounting of the column hole cover 1 may be accomplished by assembling the first end portion 20 together with the spacer 18, and thereof to the vehicle body 14 via the steering gear box 9. The spacer 18 is disposed between the first end portion 20 and the steering gear box 9. The second end portion 21 is retained as simply pressed against the instrument panel 4, thus negating the need to be fixed by using a screw or another fixing means. --

Please replace the paragraph, at page 8, lines 2-18, with the following amended paragraph:

-- Next, referring to Fig.3B, the annular seal 22 is placed on an upper side of the column hole cover 1, the axial direction S of which the column hole cover 1 is inclined relative to the vertical direction Z so as to bring the annular seal 22 substantially into parallel relation with the circumferential portion 6 of the aperture 5a of the column hole 5. The sub-assembly 40 including the column hole cover 1 held in this position is bodily moved from place just below the column hole 5 of the

instrument panel 4 along an upward direction Z1 until the annular seal 22 of the column hole cover 1 is abutted on the inclined circumferential portion 6 of the aperture 5a of the column hole 5. At this time, the column hole cover 1 is moved toward the inclined circumferential portion 6 along a direction obliquely intersecting the inclined circumferential portion 6 (equivalent to the upward direction Z1). --

AMENDMENT   10/828,503